

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-01

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O R 120800Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY TANANARIVE

TO USINFO WASHDC IMMEDIATE

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 7007

UNCLAS TANANARIVE 0400

FOR: IBS COVERAGE DESK, AFRICAN DIVISION

IAA IPS AF BRANCH

1. IN ITS MOST RECENT "REVIEW OF THE WEEK", PUBLISHED ON MARCH 10, THE GOVERNMENTAL NEWS AGENCY "MADAGASCAR PRESSE" ENUMERATED A SERIES OF EVENTS ATTESTING TO THE GRADUAL RETURN TO NORMALCY OF MANY ASPECTS OF MALAGASY LIFE: THE RESUMPTION BY AIR MADAGASCAR OF SEVERAL OF ITS DOMESTIC FLIGHTS, THE RE-OPENING OF SECONDARY SCHOOLS (MARCH 3) AND OF THE UNIVERSITY (MARCH 6), THE AUTHORIZATION OF SALES OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES, WHICH HAD BEEN FORBIDDEN SINCE THE ASSASSINATION OF COLONEL RATSIMANDRAVA ON FEBRUARY 11.

2. PRESS REPORTS FROM THE PROVINCES ALSO INDICATE THAT THE SHORTENING OF THE CUREFEW HOURS HAVE NIGHT CLUBS IN CITIES SUCH AS: FIANARANTSOA, OR DIEGO SUAREZ.

3. IN TANANARIVE, HOWEVER, THE 19:30 TO 05:00 HOURS CUREFEW REMAINS IN EFFECT. ONE OF THE REASONS THE MILITARY DIRECTORATE PROBABLY FEELS THAT IT MUST CONTINUE TO EXERCISE GREAT PRUDENCE IN MATTERS OF SECURITY MAY BE THE FACT THAT QUITE A NUMBER OF FORMER INMATES OF THE ANTANIMORA PRISON ARE STILL FREE.

4. IT WILL BE REMEMBERED THAT DURING THE FEBRUARY

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12-13 FIGHTING IN TANANARIVE, THE FRS (FORCES REPU-

BLICAINES DE SECURITE) ENTERED THE ANTANIMORA PRISON AND FREED THE 3,200 INMATES WHO WERE IMPRISONED THERE. SOME 500 PRISONERS PROMPTLY RESPONDED TO THE APPEAL ISSUED BY THE MILITARY DIRECTORATE AND REPORTED TO THE AUTHORITIES SHORTLY AFTER THE END OF THE FIGHTING. ANOTHER 1,480 HAVE SINCE BEEN RECAPTURED BY THE POLICE AND THE GENDARMERIE. BUT 1,320 OF THEM, ACCORDING TO "MADAGASCAR PRESSE", ARE STILL FREE AND, OBVIOUSLY, CONSTITUTE A SECURITY PROBLEM.

5. ON THE ECONOMIC FRONT, THE MILITARY GOVERNORS OF MADAGASCAR'S SIX PROVINCES ARE WAGING A CAMPAIGN AGAINST ILLICIT PRICES. THEIR EFFORTS SEEM TO HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL SO FAR. "MADAGASCAR PRESSE" REPORTS THOUGH THAT SEVERAL COMPANIES IN TANANARIVE AND IN OTHER CITIES HAVE CLOSED THEIR DOORS, TEMPORARILY.

6. THE ONE DIPLOMATIC EVENT OF THE MONTH WAS THE PRESENTATION OF CREDENTIALS BY THE NEW FRENCH AMBASSADOR, MR. ANDRE ROGER, TO THE HEAD OF MADAGASCAR'S MILITARY DIRECTORATE, GENERAL GILLES ANDRIAMAZO ON MARCH 6.

7. ON MARCH 10, THE MALAGASY MEDIA ANNOUNCED THE COMPOSITION OF THE MILITARY TRIBUNAL. IT WILL BE PRESIDED BY MR. RABEMALANTO, A CIVILIAN, CHAMBER PRESIDENT (PRESIDENT DE CHAMBRE) AT THE APPELATE COURT (COUR D'APPEL OF TANANARIVE. ITS OTHER FOUR (MILITARY) MEMBERS WILL BE: GENERAL PHILIBERT RAMAROLAHY, MAJOR RAVOHITRARIVO, MAJOR FIAKARA AND CAPTAIN REHADA. THERE HAS BEEN NO ANNOUNCEMENT SO FAR CONCERNING TRIALS.

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